

NUCLEAR STATUS, 1999

NUCLEAR - WEAPON STATES

China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, United States: Each of these five states originally declared its nuclear-weapons program and was recognized under the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as a nuclear-weapon state because it had tested a nuclear weapon prior to Jan. 1, 1967. Estimated total nuclear warhead stockpiles: U.S., 12,070; Russia, 22,500; United Kingdom, 260; France, 450; China, 400.

When the Soviet Union collapsed in late 1991, nuclear weapons remained on the territory of many of the new independent states. Strategic nuclear weapons remained in three besides Russia: Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine. Russia was recognized as the Soviet Union's sole nuclear-weapon-state successor. All tactical nuclear weapons were withdrawn to Russia by June 1992. Russia assumed control over all Soviet nuclear weapons, and all strategic nuclear weapons were withdrawn to Russia by November 1996—completing an unprecedented de-nuclearization process (see Renunciations below).

NON - NPT NUCLEAR - WEAPON STATES

India, Israel, Pakistan: Both India and Pakistan conducted nuclear explosive tests in May 1998 and declared themselves nuclear-weapon states. Neither is an NPT member, and neither is recognized by the NPT or other international treaties as a nuclear-weapon state. Neither is believed to have deployed nuclear weapons as of June 1998, but India is considered to be able to assemble 60-70 weapons, and Pakistan about 15 weapons, on short notice. Israel, which also is not an NPT member, has not declared its nuclear-weapon capability but is believed to have an operational arsenal of over 100 weapons.

HIGH - RISK STATES

Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea: All are suspected of seeking nuclear weapons but are currently subject to international controls and technological constraints. Although these states are party to the NPT and have denied seeking nuclear weapons, their non-proliferation commitments are still considered suspect. North Korea is closest to having nuclear weapons; it agreed to freeze and ultimately dismantle its nuclear weapons program under the October 1994 U.S.–North Korean Agreed Framework; it may have separated enough weapons-grade material for a nuclear device. Iran is eight to ten years from nuclear weapons—but could accelerate its program if nuclear assets leaked from the former Soviet Union. Iraq's extensive nuclear program was dismantled by U.N. inspectors, but clandestine procurement efforts and nuclear-weapons-related research probably continue. Libya has an extremely limited nuclear infrastructure.

RENUNCIATIONS

Algeria, Argentina, Belarus, Brazil, Kazakhstan, Romania, South Africa, Ukraine: South Africa dismantled its arsenal of six nuclear weapons in the early 1990s and signed the NPT in 1991; the IAEA has verified complete dismantlement of all nuclear devices. Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine fulfilled earlier commitments to non-nuclear-weapon status and cooperated with Russia's removal of all strategic and tactical nuclear weapons located on their territory after the Soviet Union collapsed. The three joined the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon states and opened all of their nuclear facilities to IAEA inspections by the end of 1996. Argentina and Brazil each brought into force the Treaty of Tlatelolco and agreed to implement a system of comprehensive IAEA and bilateral inspections; Argentina acceded to the NPT in February 1995. Algeria acceded to the NPT in January 1995. Romania, under the Ceausescu regime, apparently pursued a nuclear-weapons development program, which included experimental plutonium extraction not subject to IAEA monitoring; after Ceausescu's overthrow in 1989, the Iliescu government terminated the program.

ABSTAINING COUNTRIES

Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovakia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Taiwan: All are countries with a significant industrial base and at least one commercial-scale nuclear facility. Several had seriously explored a nuclear-weapons option in the 1960s or 1970s, but all have signed the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon states, have accepted comprehensive IAEA inspections, and are believed to be in compliance with their NPT obligations.